

September 30, 2014

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## Budget

- **Fiscal Year 2015 Begins**

Congress did not meet deadlines for passing any of its 12 spending bills in order to move forward with regular order for the Fiscal Year 2015 budget beginning October 1 of this year. Therefore, Congress needed to approve a continuing resolution (CR) in order to fund the government past the end of this month. The drafting of the CR began in the House of Representatives and set funding for the government from October 1-December 11, just beyond the November elections. The funding is based on the current budget rate of \$1.012 trillion annually, however with extra money allocated to efforts such as fighting the Ebola epidemic and Syrian crisis abroad, there have been across the board cuts of .0554 percent. DD Councils can expect to receive similar allocations as they did in Fiscal Year 2014. With a CR in place, Congress has now recessed until after the elections (November 6) and upon returning will address the FY15 budget from December forward. For more information, the White House Blog did a wonderful job of explaining [what a continuing resolution is here](#). Further questions about the continuing resolution and budget can be addressed to Esme Grant at [egrant@nacdd.org](mailto:egrant@nacdd.org)

## Health and Entitlements

- **NACDD Announces 5 Part Webinar Series on HCBS Rule with National Partners!**



NACDD is thrilled to announce a five part webinar series on the HCBS rule in partnership with the Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN), Collaboration for the Promotion of Self-Determination (CPSD), National Disability Rights Network (NDRN), and the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)!

This five part Tuesday webinar series starting September 30 will cover the ins and outs of the new Home and Community-Based Services settings regulation issued by the Centers for Medicaid & Medicare services in January. Learn how the new HCBS settings regulation will impact services in your state and how your input can make the difference between integration and segregation for people with disabilities. [Click here](#) for more information and to register for our exciting upcoming webinar series. And please spread the word! All webinars will be archived at [hcbadvocacy.org](http://hcbadvocacy.org)

## [REGISTER NOW!](#)

- **The Latest on ABLE Act**

Although NACDD and many other national disability organizations expected a vote on the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act in September, a couple of issues have delayed it until after November elections. NACDD has learned that members are currently working on how to pay for the \$2 billion price tag the bill will cost over the next ten years. Secondly, due to some changes made in the House Ways and Means Committee

version to get the price tag down to \$2 billion, NACDD has learned that the bill will require a couple of technical clarifications. Among the changes, one has to have acquired their disability by age 26 in order to be eligible for an ABLE account. The bill continues to have immense support in both Houses and its lead supporters on both sides of the aisle have been working to get the bill passed following elections. Before leaving for recess on September 19, the [Senate Finance Committee issued a bipartisan statement](#) of their intent to pass the legislation and announced resolution of some of the lingering issues. Learn more about the bill [here](#).

- **Social Security Commissioner Passes Senate Committee – Now to Floor Vote**

With Social Security on the docket of top issues for 2015, the Senate Finance Committee moved quickly with a 22-2 vote to confirm Carolyn Colvin as the Commissioner of the Social Security Administrator (she has been Acting Commissioner since February 2013). Colvin now awaits a Senate Floor vote to make her position official. Read more about the Committee vote and Colvin's background [here](#).

## Employment

- **National Disability Employment Awareness Month**

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) and NACDD is leading the charge on getting you the tools and information you need to celebrate, employ, and empower! Check out [NACDD's Social Media Calendar](#) with different resources for the 31 day awareness month. And be sure to post the image below to your Facebook and other social media by [downloading it here](#).



- **The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act – What's Next?**

The exciting passage of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) in July has led many to ask, what's next? The majority of WIOA provisions will become effective on July 1, 2015, the first full program year after enactment. In the meantime, the federal government is hard at work collecting comments, reorganizing its structure (for instance, creating the new Administration on Independent Living), and adding community members to its new WIOA advisory committee. NACDD will keep you posted on the latest as these changes begin to take shape. If you missed the Department of Labor's webinars on the new legislation, you can [access the archived material here](#).

## Education

- **Forecast of Education Policy Making in 2015**

In an interview with Politico, Chairman John Kline (R-MN) of the House Education and Workforce Committee revealed that in 2015 he expects to work on reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, work on rewriting the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and even work on the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education (IDEA) Act. Senator Alexander (R-TN), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee [has also suggested](#) that his focus will be on ESEA reauthorization. NACDD's Public Policy Committee will plan on focusing on this important education legislation in the beginning of the next Congress.

## In Other News

- **Senator Harkin Holds Final Disability Hearing with DD Council as Witness**



On September 18, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee held a hearing to examine the intersection between disability and poverty. Dr. Alison Lozano, Executive Director of the New Jersey DD Council, was chosen by the Committee to testify. Chairman Harkin (D-IA), who has led disability policy for almost forty years in the Senate, announced that this hearing was likely his last one on disability

policy. NACDD worked with the Senate HELP Committee over the summer to gather input for Senator Harkin's report issued following the hearing. NACDD will continue to work on this issue in the coming year and will continue to inform Congress and policymakers at all levels regarding the barriers that people with developmental disabilities face in overcoming poverty and ways to move beyond poverty into economic self-sufficiency.

To watch Alison and others present their testimony, [click here](#)

To read the full report [click here](#)

- **Disability Treaty**

On September 17, Senator Harkin (D-IA) took to the Senate floor to ask for unanimous consent to move forward with a two hour debate and floor vote on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Although unanimous consent requests are common on the Senate floor, they can be overcome with one member objecting. Senator Mike Lee (R-UT) made an objection and quashed the request, citing that members needed more than two hours of debate due to concerns that required additional amendments to the treaty. The treaty could come up for a vote after November elections, although Senate Majority Leader Reid (D-NV) has expressed that it would need to have 67 confirmed votes to be placed on the Senate calendar (currently it needs about 6 more). For a helpful perspective on the treaty, read former AIDD Commissioner Pat Morrissey's blog [here](#).



## The Face of Congress

- **Meet your Member: Senator Schumer (D-NY)**



Senator Charles (Chuck) Schumer (D-NY) has been serving as a Democratic Senator from New York since 2009. He is originally from Brooklyn and shortly after becoming an attorney, began his public service in the New York legislature. In fact, Senator Schumer joined New York's State Assembly at the age of 23, becoming the youngest member of the New York legislature since Theodore Roosevelt. Many know Senator Schumer for his close relationship with the media, but recently he has risen to NACDD's attention because of his lead support for several disability bills including the ABLE Act, the Community Integration Act, and Avonte's Law (NACDD worked directly on this bill with Senator Schumer's office). Senator Schumer is on several key Senate Committees, serving as Chairman of the Senate Rules Committee, and member of the Senate Judiciary, Finance, and Housing Committees. We look forward to working with Senator Schumer on future disability legislation!

- **Register to Vote!**

Major elections are coming up in November so if you or someone you know are not registered to vote, now is the time to do it! Exercise your right to choose your representation. [Click here](#) for more information on how to register. NACDD will be launching a website with the goal of increasing the number of voters with disabilities and highlighting Members of Congress with disabilities, so be on the lookout!

Need more information? Contact NACDD Director of Public Policy, Esmé Grant, at [egrant@nacdd.org](mailto:egrant@nacdd.org). For up to date policy happenings, follow us on Twitter @NACDD!